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The Impact of Migrant Labour on the Swazi Homestead as Solidarity Group

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THE IMPACT OF MIGRANT LABOUR ON THE SWAZI HOMESTEAD AS SOLIDARITY GROUP

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1. Introduction[1]

Since the end of last century labour migration has become a major feature of societies in Southern Africa. Much attention has been paid to the labour migration from the so called 'BLS countries' (Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland) to South Africa (see, for example, Elkan 1978, Kowet 1978, De Vletter 1985, Whiteside 1992). The single most important feature of this labour migration is that it is circular (Elkan 1978:145) and purely temporary, hardly ever for more than two years. After that migrants return home, though the likelihood is that in the course of their lives they will migrate several times. Reasons for this circular - or oscillating - migration are that the South African Government does in fact not permit migrants to stay longer than two years and accommodation is only provided for the worker alone. The migrant's family has to stay behind in the country of origin. Moreover, even if the South African Government would allow long-term permits and families to come with the migrant, it is the question whether the whole family would migrate. Living on communal lands, families have free accommodation and part of the total family income is provided by produce of the farm, being either food for own consumption or cash crops. As the system of communal land tenure does not permit sale of land, farms cannot be sold and if sale was allowed families would not do so, because due to the absence of borrowing facilities the price received for the farm would lay far below its expected future stream of income (Elkan 1978:146-7).

Although labour migration to South Africa is a less pronounced feature of Swazi society than, for instance, in Lesotho (see Murray 1978 and 1981), its impact on all levels of Swazi society cannot be denied. A number of publications appeared on this subject (Booth 1986 and 1988, Daniel 1982, Fransman 1982, Kowet 1978, Levin 1985, Low 1986, Neocosmos 1987, Rosen-Prinz and Prinz 1978, Russell 1984 and 1988, De Vletter 1982, 1983). Most of these studies deal with migrant labour at a macro-level and analyze nation-wide figures of labour migration, investigate its causes and discuss its economic, social and political implications. This paper wants to give a contribution to the discussion on what migrant labour does to the Swazi homestead. It is analyzed in what respects migrant labour might affect the homestead as a solidarity group providing social security to its members. Section 2 gives a brief introduction to the conditions which makes a group a solidarity group and how these apply to the Swazi homestead. In the Sections 3 till 6 an attempt is made to assess the influence of migrant labour on the characteristic features of a solidarity group by comparing a group of homesteads with migrant labourers in South Africa and a group of homesteads without them. Data are derived from a 1990 survey among 195 homesteads. From this survey 83 cases are used for this paper.

A few qualifications have to made before starting the discussion. Firstly, it is the homestead as a solidarity group which is the focus of the discussion. No attention is paid to the migrant him- or herself. In other words, the focus is on those who are left behind on the homestead. Secondly, the

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[1] This paper is based on a research paper presented at the seminar "Social Security, Law and Socio-Economic Change", held at the Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Law, Erasmus University of Rotterdam, 6 October 1992. I thank Hans Linnemann for useful suggestions and comments.

study is restricted to homesteads situated on communal land in the rural areas, so-called Swazi Nation Land (SNL).[2] Thirdly, the analysis only includes those homesteads which have migrant labourers in South Africa and those who have no wage labourers at all. A substantial part of Swazi homesteads (39.4 percent in the sample) has one or more members doing wage-labour in Swaziland. These members are either resident or are absent during the week but return in the weekends. The latter are also migrants, but can be denoted as so called "commuters". This form of migration differs strongly from the migration to South Africa whereby migrants return once a year and is therefore excluded from the analysis. In addition 17.6 percent of the homesteads in the survey have members working in Swaziland as well as members working in South Africa. Also this group of homesteads is excluded from the analysis in order to make the differences between homesteads without and with migrant labour in South Africa more clear. This means that the sample analyzed in this paper contains 83 homesteads of which 37 homesteads have migrant labourers in South Africa and 46 homesteads have not. Although the number of observations is not large, it is thought large enough to indicate some main tendencies and differences. The fourth and last qualification is that the survey of 1990 was not meant to find explicit data on the specific questions addressed in this paper. Not all propositions in this paper can be sustained by data from this survey, and findings from other sources are used where necessary.

2. The Homestead as Solidarity Group

The homestead as basic social and economic unit in Swaziland has been widely discussed by social scientists (see, among others, Allen 1973, Holleman 1964, Hughes 1972, Kuper 1947 and 1963, Marwick 1966, Neocosmos 1987, Ngubane 1983, Russell 1983, Sibisi 1979, De Vletter 1983). What exactly is a homestead? Hughes (1972:69) indicates that sometimes the term homestead refers to a physical entity (huts, cattle byre and arable lands), and sometimes it refers to a specific social group. To avoid confusion I adhere to the common practice of most social scientists in Swaziland to indicate with the homestead the social group.

The term "homestead" is a translation of the siSwati word *"umuti"*, indicating a family group living in a small family settlement. It is a family group whose members live together in consequence of being close kin (Ngubane 1983:95). In this sense the *umuti* differs from the village, where also most or even all of its members may be related, but without an inherent connection between kinship and proximity. Whereas a village has a resident headman or some other form of authority recognized as responsible for the affairs of the village as such, the head of the Swazi type of family settlement is simply the head of the family group. Since his position depends on how he is related to the other

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[2] Swazi Nation Land covers two-thirds of the total land surface in Swaziland. Part of Swazi Nation Land is divided into some 172 chiefdoms, each headed by a chief. The chief takes charge of the distribution of this communal land among homesteads in his chiefdom in name of the King. Another part of Swazi Nation Land falls under direct jurisdiction of the King and belongs to him and the royal family. The remaining one-third of the land is privately owned, and is either given in concession by the Swazi state to forestry and sugar companies, their plantations covering almost one-fourth of the country, or belongs to individual tenants in which case land is called Individual Tenure Land or Title Deed Land.

members, and not primarily on where he lives, he remains the head of the group even during a prolonged absence (Ngubane 1983:95). "Homestead" is not entirely satisfactory as translation of *umuti*, but it serves to highlight that it is neither a village nor simply a household; it may well contain several households. These households (*tindlu*, sing. *indlu*) may centre around the headman's wife or wives and their (unmarried) children, and/or around married brothers or sons with their wives and children. The woman in the household has her own kitchen and sleeping huts, and her own fields and cattle allotted for the use of her household. By dint of her own industry and some assistance from her husband she produces crops (mainly maize) from the fields to provide food for the unit. Each household has its own food store. However, some of the land allocated to the homestead is not distributed to the *tindlu*, but worked upon together by all homestead members. This land is called "grandmother's field" and its fruits accrue to the homestead head. He may keep the produce for himself, but more likely he will keep it in store and redistribute it among those households of which the supplies are inadequate to meet its needs. Whatever a woman earns by bartering some of her produce accrues to her own household. The same holds for the husband, although some of his earnings may accrue to the homestead as a whole in the form of food, agricultural inputs and utensils. Within homesteads, then, households can be seen as units of consumption and partly also as units of production. Nowadays, however, multi-household homesteads are less and less the rule, and the latest population census (Central Statistical Office 1986) found that only 16.5 percent of the homesteads on SNL contained two or more households. In my survey I found 14.4 percent of the homesteads to have two or more households.

It can safely be stated that the homestead is the basic unit of Swazi society, and as such it has several functions in Swazi society. These functions can be labelled as economic, educational, ceremonial and legal (Marwick 1966:43). Customarily, one of its functions also is to provide social protection for the individual member against economic or social shortfalls. As Ngubane states (1983:103): "..., a Swazi is also entitled to assistance and protection from his umuti (underlining Ngubane) in time of need, as when he is ill or infirm, disabled or too old to fend for himself, or else afflicted with misfortune. In short, it provides him with a comprehensive security he can scarcely find in any alternative institution or body." As in many other societies, in Swaziland social protection is internalised within the domestic unit of production and consumption (see Zacher 1988, Freiburg-Strauss and Jung 1988), i.e., the homestead. Although many studies on the homestead (Kuper 1947 and 1963, Marwick 1966, Ngubane 1983, Russell 1983 and 1984) emphasize its "social security role" and the entitlement of the homestead members to this social security, the important question remains whether or not the homestead as a social group is actually able to meet the demands that come from within the homestead. As Partsch (1983:62-8) noted, several economic and social conditions have to be fulfilled before a social group can also act as a solidarity group, i.e., a group in which means are distributed from productive members to members who are not able to provide themselves with means.[3] Let me review these conditions and apply them to the homestead.

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[3] The term "means" sounds vague, but by using this term I indicate that not only goods (commodities), but also money and labour (services) are included in the set of items that may be redistributed.

First of all, in order to redistribute means, sufficient means have to be produced and become available within the homestead as a whole. In general this means that each productive homestead member should produce more than necessary for his or her own minimum standard of living. A minimum standard of living can be defined in terms of capabilities, i.e., the abilities of an individual to achieve minimum levels of certain basic functionings (such as being adequately nourished, minimally sheltered, and so on) (see Sen 1985, Drèze and Sen 1991). In developing countries, and also in Swaziland, the majority of people live in poverty or deprivation which is the failure to have the ability to achieve minimum levels of certain basic functionings. Given this general phenomenon of poverty one could easily conclude that within the homestead no one is able to reach a certain minimum standard of living that, consequently, social protection does not work. But, as Freiburg-Strauss and Jung (1988:231) conclude, deprivation does not lead to an abrupt disruption of social security. Deprivation generally results from a gradual worsening of conditions under which homestead production takes place, and its consequences for the homestead as solidarity group will therefore also become gradually clear. Studies on economic differentiation among homesteads (De Vletter 1983, Neocosmos 1987, Income and Expenditure Survey 1985) make clear that the conditions are not the same for all homesteads; homesteads differ considerably in their capacity to raise means, so that the standard of living of homesteads differs accordingly. It is noted, then, that also the capacity of homesteads to function as solidarity group will, among other things, vary with its economic position. In Section 6 of this paper I return to this discussion.

A second condition for the solidarity group is that the ratio non-productive members / productive members cannot be too high, in order to prevent a unacceptable burden on the productive members of the group. Although an acceptable upper bound to this so-called dependency ratio cannot be given, an increasing number of non-productive members would either lead to all homestead members having less than sufficient means when the remaining productive homestead members keep sharing their produce with the non-productive, or it would lead to lower and lower means available for the non-productive members when productive members want to sustain their own standard of living. Whether or not this ratio is too high for a homestead cannot be said a priori as the ratio differs through the development cycle of the homestead. Low (1986) distinguished five stages in the "life-cycle" of the homestead whereby the homestead develops from small to large to small again: establishment, expansion, consolidation, decline and fission. Each stage corresponds with different sizes and dependency ratios, which are highest and lowest respectively in the consolidation stage. At the same time Low found strong correlations between the stage of development and economic performance of the homestead. In further sections I use this classification to distinguish among the 86 homesteads. For the way in which homesteads are classified I refer to Appendix A.

The two conditions mentioned above can be denoted as primarily economic conditions for a solidarity group. Social conditions are equally important. Sufficient means available and a relatively favourable dependency ratio do as such not guarantee that the social group also functions as a solidarity group. For a social group to be a solidarity group its size, composition, stability over time and redistribution principle(s) are also of utmost importance.

The size of the group is important because it determines on how many members the burden falls to take care of the unproductive members in the group. The larger the size the less the burden for each productive member. Partsch (1983:65) suggests that a group, therefore, should be larger than the nuclear family to discuss in a sensible way social protection within family groups. Homestead sizes do vary widely depending on both the stage of the development cycle and the extent to which they contain one or more households. In my sample of 195 homesteads the average homestead size was 10.1 persons, but behind this average a variation could be found from 1 till 30 persons constituting the homestead. 83.9 percent of the sample homesteads had a size over 5 persons and 45.0 percent had 11 members or more. Just a minority of the sample homesteads (10.2 percent) could be labelled as a nuclear family group (see also Section 4).

The composition of the group must be such that at any point in time sufficient members are there to transfer means to the unproductive group members. In other words, the composition should be such that not all members face the same risks and do not lose their productive power or production at the same time. Following Platteau (1991:139) one could say that the relative absence of covariate risks makes a group better suited to function as solidarity group. Several features of the social group constituting the homestead do meet this condition. First of all homesteads contain several generations; in 60 percent of the sample cases, homesteads contained three generations or more. Social contingencies like old age and age-bound diseases are not likely to happen then among all members at the same time. Besides, both sexes are present on the homestead. Because of a strict gender division of labour by which women work in domestic activities and subsistence agriculture and men are engaged in wage labour or other income generating activities, the presence of both sexes guarantees a spread of different productive activities over different homestead members. When the production of one or a few members falls short because of economic or social contingencies, not all production is lost. To some extent, then, the homestead is always able to raise means when one of its members fall short. However, to the extent that homestead members have common risks, like the risk to be infected by diseases or natural disasters, or are engaged in the same type of productive activities the homestead will be less able to cope with the consequences and social protection will have to come from outside the homestead.

The durability and stability in time of the group is the third social condition. For all members it must be certain that the group will continue to exist when contingencies occur and during the whole period in which consequences are felt as result of the contingency. Therefore, especially social groups that are able to replace departing members over time are suitable as solidarity groups. Extended families or clans are perfect solidarity groups from this point of view. Although it would be too opportunistic to suggest that the homestead is an extended family in its strict sense, its continuing existence is certain to its members. Because the relations between homestead members are based on kinship ties, the individual becomes member of the a kingroup when he or she is born and will stay member till his or her death. In this way the homestead is far better suited as solidarity group than groups based on neighbourhood, friendship or contract. In contrast to the latter forms, kinship exists relatively independent from the will of the individual and will survive the particular life time of an individual. Furthermore, Partsch (1983:100-1) states that this condition is best fulfilled through kin groups of which the existence is not threatened when one of

the members falls out. In two-generation families the marriage of the children or the death of the parents will finish the existence of the group. In three-generation families this problem does not occur. Through birth and marriage new members are included and the presence of three generations ensures a relatively easy care for children and elderly.

A final social condition for a group to be a solidarity group is that a principle must be present that obliges members to support other members when necessary. There must be norms or values that force members to redistribute means from those who have to those who have not. The existence of such a "normative insurance" (Partsch 1983:67) is a prerequisite because it ensures that individual members will contribute and will contribute sufficiently at times that this is needed. Customary rules, moral principles and community norms constitute, therefore, a powerful means of assuring each group member that cooperation will ensue and the obligation created will be enforced (Platteau 1991:139). Also within the homestead such moral principles exist. Ngubane (1983:104) says on this point: "it is the umuti (underlining Ngubane) which has first claim on a member, for its support of its members and especially those of his own house (*indlu*, A.L.) as well as generally for the maintenance of the physical structure, its land and its livestock, as his or her circumstances permit and his or her age, sex and marital status dictate more specifically. Even if only by sending money, or bringing goods when he or she can, he or she should make his or her contribution". In sum, homestead membership implies also having economic obligations and rights towards other homestead members. These obligations and rights are, however, highly dependent on sex, age, marital status and someone's social position in the homestead.

As said the gender division of labour forces women into domestic and (subsistence) agricultural activities. This results in a restricted access to monetary earnings of female homestead members and therefore women made traditionally their economic contributions to the homestead directly in labour (Russell 1984:19). More specific to the role of women in the homestead as solidarity group their contribution is derived from the gender division of labour: as domestic activities also include daily care of the children, the elderly, sick, disabled and so on, women have an important role in the provision of social protection to the unproductive on the homestead. Male members have far more access to monetary earnings and their contribution includes the provision of goods, agricultural inputs and money. In case unproductive members need money for treatment or specific goods, male members will be responsible for this.

Age is another important factor determining obligations and rights within the homestead. Children have few obligations in Swazi society, although they are expected to contribute to labour like cattle herding (young boys) or some light domestic activities (girls). When women and men are married they have reached complete man- and womanhood in Swazi society. In this stage both married man and women are mainly responsible for the welfare of both the younger and the elder generations. When they themselves become older they have and less to do with economic activities. Younger generations will take the major part in the economic pursuits of the homestead, and the older people have an increasing important position in the social sphere (Marwick 1966:68-71).

The marital status of the homestead member influences the direction of the economic obligations. The unmarried female stay at her parents' homestead and her labour efforts and her earnings accrue to her parents. When she marries her productive efforts will accrue to her husbands' (fathers') homestead. A young unmarried male is in the same position as an unmarried woman.

His earnings should accrue for the largest parts to other members of the homestead, especially his father. When he is married earnings accrue to his own household, even though strong obligations to other homestead members continue, but these result from age or kin relations rather than from being married or not.
Although Swazi make a distinction between homestead membership and kinship ties, in practice these relationships often coincide. But kinship in itself determines also obligations and rights homestead members have towards each other. Within the homestead the main kin relations are between children and parents, among siblings, and between wife and husband (affinal kin relations). The obligations and rights between children and parents change over a life-time. Parents are obliged to give to their children as long they are not able to produce their own means. As soon as the latter happens children begin to take care of their parents. The classificatory kinship system gives Swazi several "fathers" and "mothers" and consequently "sons" and "daughters", but the obligations to the biological parents and children remain strongest. Full brothers and sisters have strong obligations among each other, while the obligations among half siblings are less strict.

In sum, when the conditions characterizing a solidarity group are applied to the homestead, at least theoretically the homestead is by and large well suited to function as such. Its size, composition and durability are such that it is able to provide (some) social protection to its members. Strong moral obligations to give and rights to receive exist within the homestead between its members. Which obligations and rights an individual homestead member has in general and at a more specific point in time depends on her or his social position in the homestead, which is a combination of someone's sex, age, marital status and place in the kinship system. Reciprocity underlies the transfers of means resulting from these obligations and rights. The economic conditions of the homestead will determine to what extent the homestead will have means available to redistribute.

In the following sections I discuss the impact of migrant labour on the several conditions which make a homestead a solidarity group.

3. Migrant Labour and the Size and Composition of the Homestead

In this section and the sections hereafter the 83 homesteads in our sample are differentiated according to their stage in the development cycle. Reasons for this differentiation are twofold. In the first place the impact of migrant labour on the homestead may differ according to the actual stage in the "life-cycle" of the homestead. In the second place, differences found between homesteads with migrant labourers and homesteads without them cannot be attributed anymore to demographic factors, because the size and composition of the homestead are kept constant for both migrant and non-migrant homesteads. In this way the influence of migrant labour can be better analyzed. Appendix A gives an explanation of the criteria used. Besides, because the issue of the dependenvy ratio is in essence a matter of composition it is also discussed in this section.
The influence of migrant labour on the size and composition works out in several ways. One of the most obvious and evident influences on the size of the homestead is the decline of the number of resident members, as can be seen from Table 1. Group 1 indicates homesteads without migrant

labourers and Group 2 indicates homesteads with migrant labourers.

Table 1: Average Size, Number of Migrants and Resident Size of Homesteads

Stage in Development Cycle	Group 1			Group 2		
	Average Size	Number of Migrants	Resident Size	Average Size	Number of Migrants	Resident Size
Establishment	5.2	0	5.2	5.3	1.0	4.3
Expansion	8.0	0	7.8	8.3	1.0	7.3
Consolidation	13.4	0	12.8	15.8	1.8	13.8
Fission	8.1	0	8.1	9.0	1.0	8.0
Decline	3.4	0	3.4	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Source: Survey 1990

Table 1 shows that the average number of migrants in Group 2 is 1 for all homesteads except those in the stage of consolidation when a large part of homesteads has two members as migrant labourers. As homesteads in the consolidation stage also contain a majority of homesteads with two or more households (50 percent), this higher figure can be attributed to each household having its 'own' migrant labourer. The average size of the homestead in terms of homestead residents is influenced, of course, in a negative way. In percent of total homestead members the effect on homesteads in the establishment stage is much higher than in the consolidation stage. The slight differences between resident size and total homestead size in Group 1 is explained by young absentee children who are temporary resident on other homesteads, because their own parents can not maintain them or because they live nearer to school then. Far more important than size, however, is the composition of the homestead and how this is influenced by having migrant labourers. In Table 2 some figures are given on this issue.

A first issue to deal with is the number of producers versus non-producers. Although the number of producers in homesteads under Group 1 and under Group 2 are roughly the same, the number of resident producers are not: in Group 2 less people are available on the homestead to perform domestic and agricultural activities, and less productive people are present to take *daily* care of non-productive people. This can be seen when looking at the dependency ratio, which is defined as the total number of residents divided by the number of resident producers. While in homesteads without migrant labour the dependency ratio is at its highest at 3.0, this figure is 4.5 for homesteads with migrant labour.
Why is the migrant excluded as a producer when calculating this dependency ratio? One can argue that migrants send home remittances and in this way contribute to the welfare of those left behind. The dependency ratio including the migrant would not differ from homesteads without migrants.

Table 2: Number of Resident Producers, Dependency Ratio, Percentage of Homesteads without Male Resident Producers and Percentage of Female Headed Homesteads

Stage in Development Cycle	Group 1				Group 2			
	No. of res. producers	Dependency Ratio	% without male res. producers	% female headed homesteads	No. of res. producers	Dependency Ratio	% without male res. producers	% female headed homesteads
Establishment	1.8	3.0	16.7	0.0 (16.7)	1.1	4.0	85.7	71.4
Expansion	2.8	2.9	0.0	0.0	2.1	4.5	40.0	60.0 (30.0)
Consolidation	4.7	3.1	0.0	0.0	4.8	3.1	6.3	25.0 (25.0)
Fission	3.6	2.4	0.0	0.0 (60.0)	2.6	4.2	N.A.	33.3 (33.3)
Decline	1.6	1.8	45.5	0.0 (45.5)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Source: Survey 1990

To some extent this is true, but as was outlined in the previous section the daily care of the welfare of the non-productive homestead members is the task of women. This task entails mainly labour activities. As the migrants are always male, their absence does not affect the "traditional" work load of the productive women. What, however, happens is that when male productive members leave the homestead, their "traditional" tasks have to be taken over by women. Especially in the earlier stages of the development cycle the migration of male members leads to a complete absence of male productive members on the homestead (see Table 2 under " % without male resident producers"). In the establishment stage of the homestead 85.7 percent of the homesteads with migrant labour had no male resident producers. This means that tasks like ploughing the fields, herding the cattle, construction and repairing, harvesting and representing the homestead becomes the task of women in addition to their already heavy working load. The time available for taking care of the non-productive, in the first stages of the development cycle mainly children, will be less, and this may have negative consequences for their welfare.

The above observations are narrowly related to the discussion around the so called "female headed households". The last column in Table 2 shows that in the establishment and expansion stage of the Group 2 homesteads 71.4 and 60.0 percent respectively are female headed homesteads because of labour migration. The figures in brackets indicate the additional percentage of female headed homesteads because of other reasons (mainly death of the male head). Although women are allowed to perform male activities in cases as described above ("necessity has no law"), they have great disadvantages when trying to obtain the means to perform these activities. Appeals for receiving more land from the chief, getting a tractor or oxen in time for ploughing, receiving help in construction activities, or help with legal disputes, or in hiring in labour, all have a chance to be less heard and honoured when asked by a woman. Thus, while doing male activities women are

also hampered in these activities because of lack of support and cooperation.
As can be seen from Table 2 the argument mainly holds for relatively "young" homesteads, and given their size and composition, these are already vulnerable homesteads from a solidarity point of view. Migrant labour increases this vulnerability and has a negative influence on the welfare of the non-productive members, which will be mainly children. The relatively "older" homesteads have far more productive members left behind, who will be better able to cope with the extra work load as it can be spread over several persons.

In Section 2 it was also argued that as a solidarity group the homestead is better off when productive activities are spread over activities which do not share the same risks. In other words, by diversifying the sources of income and produce the homesteads can prevent that all produce or income will be lost at the same time. By engaging in wage labour, part of the homestead production is realized outside the homestead, which in itself means a spread of risks. It is often argued that wage-labour is a useful supplement to the homestead's agricultural produce but whether migrant labour has a positive or a negative effect on the composition of the homestead in this respect is open to discussion and should be analyzed by incorporating the other income or produce generating activities of the homestead. Table 3 presents the extent of diversification of income sources.

Table 3: Homesteads and the Number of Income Sources (in % of homesteads in each stage)

Stage in Homestead Development Cycle	Group 1			Group 2			
	Number of Income Sources			Number of Income Sources			
	1	2	3	1	2	3	4
Establishment	0.0	66.7	33.3	14.3	42.9	28.6	14.3
Expansion	0.0	50.0	50.0	10.0	30.0	40.0	20.0
Consolidation	11.1	33.3	55.6	0.0	0.0	43.8	56.2
Fission	20.0	30.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Decline	36.4	36.4	18.2	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Source: Survey 1990

For homesteads without migrant labourers three forms of producing can be distinguished: subsistence agriculture, commercial agriculture and other income-generating activities, often denoted as rural industry or small-scale enterprise activities. In Group 1 only relatively older homesteads have one source of income, being either subsistence agriculture or small scale activities (rural industry). Given the composition of these homesteads with relatively elderly people and few

productive members (see Table 2), available labour time is devoted to one activity only. However, most homesteads in Group 1 have two or three income sources. In most cases homesteads with two sources combine subsistence agriculture with rural industry. In this way food for the homestead is directly secured and is supplemented with money to buy other necessary goods. Commercial agriculture is either an extension of subsistence maize agriculture or involves the production of cotton. Homesteads with commercial agriculture have mostly three sources of income. Homesteads having more (productive) members available have more labour time that can be spent on income generating activities. On the other hand the larger size and the larger dependency ratios forces these homestead to raise an income as high as possible in order to feed all mouths.

Looking at Group 2 reveals that a minority of these homesteads depends on wage-labour only as source of income. These homesteads are, of course, extremely vulnerable because unemployment would immediately lead to a complete lack of food or income. Many "young" homesteads have one other source of income besides wage-labour, which is in most cases subsistence agriculture. These homesteads are rarely involved in rural industry: the bulk of the money is secured by remittances (see Sections 5 and 6), and there is no time for other income generating activities. Homesteads with a combination of subsistence agriculture and wage-labour are mostly female headed homesteads. Being often the only adult member of the homestead women are not able to go to the market to sell their produce. In this way they are forced to do subsistence agriculture, even if they would have time to be engaged in rural industry. Mainly homesteads in the consolidation stage have combined migrant labour with all other produce or income generating activities. For these homesteads migrant labour is not an alternative as in other cases, but is done besides other activities. Being engaged in all kind of activities these homesteads have a considerable spread of risks.

It might be concluded that homesteads in Group 1 and in Group 2 have spread their activities to the same extent, except for some homesteads in the establishment and expansion stage in Group 2. Only the kind of activities over which productive efforts are spread differ and with this the kind of risks that are met (see Section 6). Income diversification itself is often seen as a form of coping with uncertainties. What can be concluded from this section is that "older" homesteads are better able to diversify income than "younger" homesteads. For the latter group the consequences of risks will be more severe than for other homesteads.

4. Labour Migration and the Durability and Stability of the Homestead

The durability of the social group is the third condition for a group to be a solidarity group. The members of the homestead must be certain the group will exist during their life time. It cannot be expected, however, that the homestead as a social group did not change during the last century. It has changed in fact, as an elaborate study of Allen (1973) showed. Has migrant labour anything to do with this, and how did and does it influence the changes taking place? This question can only be answered after a short survey of the various changes taking place.

A general idea in development literature is that in a society that develops from a traditional subsistence society towards a modern economy, extended families develop towards nuclear families, i.e., husband, wife and children (Murray 1981, United Nations 1986). I distinguish between the

process whereby multi-household homesteads are replaced by one-household homesteads and the process whereby three or more generation homesteads are replaced by two generation homesteads. Multi-household homesteads generate from polygyny as well as from married sons staying on their parents' homestead. The decrease of polygyny was already observed by Kuper (1947) and later by Allen (1973). The introduction of Christianity at the beginning of this century has slowly lead to a decline of polygyny. Also there has been a decreasing incidence of married sons staying with own households on the parental homestead. Kuper (1947:16) reported in this context that the homestead was decreasing from the old "multi-household" ideal because of "less need for defense, greater independence of married couples (particularly Christians) and limitations of land". What is also suggested in the literature (Allen 1973, Low 1986) is that married sons or brothers leave the homestead because migrant labour gives young men early opportunities to raise an income allowing them to establish their own homesteads. For homesteads in the establishment and expansion stage I found an average age of the head of 36 and 42 years, respectively. Given the average age of 55 years of the heads of homesteads in the consolidation stage one might suggest that homesteads in earlier stages have broken away from their parent's homestead. A further indication for households breaking away is the finding that homesteads in the later stages of the development cycle (fission and decline) consist only of one household in which a widow or elderly couple live alone with only one (unmarried) son or daughter. Other children have left the homestead and established their own homestead. It should be noted, however, that migrant labour cannot be the only reason. Homesteads in Group 1 have no migrant labourers but also within this group "young" homesteads can be found that broke away from their parent's homestead. This might indicate that besides migrant labour providing early cash opportunities the other reasons mentioned above are equally important. Respondents in the survey frequently indicated that reasons for households to stay together on the same site is subject to rather individual decisions nowadays, and not on what society expect them to do. Migrant labour providing cash could well influence this decision, but I cannot support this proposition by data.

As we saw, the stability of a solidarity group is also strengthened when it consists of three or more generations. A consequence of the earlier break-up of homesteads as described above is that "young" homesteads consisting of two generations are created and "older" homesteads with only one or two generations are left behind. Table 4 gives some data showing that in the consolidation and fission stage the majority of the homesteads has three or more generations, but in the earlier stages and in the decline stage two generations prevail as could be expected given the way homesteads are classified. Does it also mean that the homestead develops into some nuclear homesteads? Again, given the way in which homesteads are classified, many nuclear homesteads can be found in the establishment stage and in the expansion stage, as can be seen in Table 4. From a durability point of view and considering the size and composition, these homesteads are less able to function as solidarity groups than homesteads in other stages. This is aggravated for homesteads in Group 2, as the husband is absent most of the year. Although migrants send money home, their unpaid labour efforts cannot be used when the wife cannot work because of contingencies. Help with activities has to be found outside the homestead, then. The durability of these nuclear homesteads can be highly questioned, and Murray (1981) has shown for Lesotho that these homesteads are very unstable. Social and economic contingencies can hardly be coped with and the

Table 4: Number of Generations on Homesteads and Percentage of Nuclear Homesteads (by stage in the development cycle and group)

Stages in Homestead Development Cycle	Group 1		Group 2	
	Number of Generations on Homestead	% Nuclear Homesteads	Number of Generations on Homestead	% Nuclear Homesteads
Establishment	2 : 100 %	100 %	1: 14 % 2: 86 %	86 %
Expansion	2 : 80 % 3 : 20 %	40 %	2 : 70 % 3 : 30 %	40 %
Consolidation	2 : 12 % 3 : 78 % 4 : 10 %	0 %	2 : 18 % 3 : 69 % 4 : 13 %	0 %
Fission	2 : 20 % 3 : 60 % 4 : 20 %	0 %	2 : 33 % 3 : 67 %	0 %
Decline	1 : 36 % 2 : 45 % 3 : 19 %	0 %	N. A.	N. A.

Source: Survey 1990

homestead will frequently break down. The wife and her children return to her parent's homestead or to her husband's parent's homestead.

Murray (1981:102-4) warns, however, that nuclear families in developing countries often appear as nuclear, but this is neither a structural feature of these families nor it does mean social and economic independence. Firstly, the nuclear family is just a stage in the development cycle and it will develop into a more than two generation family. Figures above suggest this may also be the case in Swaziland. Secondly, nuclear families might appear isolated from their wider environment because of separate sites, but family gatherings take place for all sorts of reasons. The conclusion that separate sites of nuclear homesteads at the same time indicates social and economic independence, as is the case in industrialized countries, does not always hold. Also observations in Swaziland showed that young homesteads, when sited in the same community, have strong relationships with the parent homestead. Sometimes the social and economic interaction is so intensive that homesteads are seperated only geographically but no more than this. The above conclusions with respect to "nuclearization" on Swazi Nation Land should be treated with care.

In sum, besides other factors, migrant labour affects the durability and stability of the homestead in

some ways. Migrant labour provides young homestead members with sufficient cash to establish their own homesteads. In this way households break away from homesteads sooner than in earlier times. This process also leads to the creation of a group of homesteads which are very "young" and consisting of a nuclear family only. As such these homesteads are relatively vulnerable and unstable, and less able to function as solidarity groups. When young households leave the homestead, the homestead left behind will also be less stable and durable. Homesteads in the decline stage also have just one or two generations, consisting of mainly elderly people then. The social protection of these people is also not guaranteed and becomes more uncertain.

There is one other influence of migrant labour on the durability and stability of the homestead which I would like to mention. Among social scientists (including economists) it can frequently be heard that oscillating migration for the homesteads involved is a "way of life", of which the consequences are fully accepted and integrated in the social and economic organization of the homestead. However, the prolonged absence of one of the two adults in young families distorts family life to a large extent and often creates psychological problems for the migrant and those left behind. The stress on women increases and feelings of neglect and loneliness are more common than superficial surveys suggest. This, in turn, creates its own social problems like divorces, alcoholism and broken families. These problems undermine the homestead as solidarity group and with a lack of alternative mechanisms that provide social protection a group of people is created for whom life becomes highly uncertain and full of insecurity.

5. Labour Migration and Principles of Distribution

For the homestead to function as a solidarity group, the existence of moral principles which oblige homesteads members to give support to those who need it, is a necessary condition. As said in Section 2, the principle of reciprocity prevailing among generations and individual members within the homestead must ensure that homestead members support each other, also in times of need. Who has obligation to give to whom or who is entitled to receive from whom, and at what time, depends on someone's social position within the homestead as determined by someone's sex, age, marital status and place in the kinship system (relationship to the head of the homestead). Obviously, also feelings of love and affection strengthen the feeling of responsibility members have towards each other.

The transfers made within the homestead for social security purposes are integral part of the general transfers of means within the homestead. The claims several homestead members have to the migrant labourer's means follow from the total pattern of this intra-homestead (re-)distribution. Because of his absence the kind of means the migrant has to offer is money. Returning with gifts just once a year, it is only in the form of regular remittances that the migrant labourer can contribute to the general welfare of the homestead, including social protection for the non-productive members. As long as the migrant labourer fulfils his monetary obligations towards those left behind the reciprocity principle seems not be in danger and the homestead as solidarity group will continue to function quite well in this respect. What does reality shows us?

To start with, Table 5 presents some data on the remittances send home by the migrant labourer. It should be clear that only homesteads of Group 2 are included in the analysis in this section.

Table 5: Percentage of Homesteads receiving Remittances, Share of Remittances in Total Disposable Income, Percentage of Total Income Migrant send Home, Remittances per Resident Member, by stage in the development cycle

Stages in Homestead Development Cycle	% of Homesteads receiving Remittances	Share (%) of Remittances in Total Disposable Income Homestead[1)]	Remittances as % of Migrant's Total Income	Remittances per Resident Homestead Member (E')[2)]
Establishment	100 %	87 %	27 %	620
Expansion	90 %	59 %	18 %	171
Consolidation	87.5 %	46 %	19 %	193
Fission	100 %	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Decline	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

1) The Total Disposable Income of the Homestead includes monetary earnings from commercial agriculture and rural industry, remittances, and the sales value of maize subsistence production.
2) E' = Emalangeni (Sing. Lilangeni), which is equivalent to 0.36 US Dollar (June 1992)

Source: Survey 1990

The figures in Table 5 suggest that most migrants send money home. Few homesteads do not receive any significant remittances. Large differences exist, however, between homesteads in the establishment stage and homesteads in the expansion and consolidation stage. In the former case remittances make up 87 percent of the total homestead income, while in the later stages this figure declines. Reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, in the expansion and consolidation stage the homesteads have more income sources than subsistence agriculture and remittances only. Table 3 already led to this conclusion. Consequently the share of remittances in the total disposable income is less. But secondly, as also can be seen in Table 5, the percentage of the wage income of the migrant that is received by the homestead declines.[4] How to explain this phenomenon? An important explanation could be the social status of the migrant labourer himself and the responsi-

[4] Note that the percentages given in Table 5 are very rough indications and are probably an underestimation of real figures. In the first place, not all homestead members were asked to report the remittances they receive from absentees and, secondly, a migrant labourer often has obligations towards people living outside his homestead as well (see also Russell 1984). Thirdly, the migrant sends not only regular remittances but also money for particular purposes like buying a tractor, payment of school fees, and so on. In these cases the percentages in the second and third column would be higher than is suggested here.

bility this involves. Migrants belonging to homesteads in the establishment stage are at the same time head of the homestead. This implies that they have full responsibility for the welfare of all homestead members. Several other sources (Allen 1973, Murray 1978, Rosen-Prinz and Prinz) indicate that this responsibility is taken seriously by the migrant and expresses itself in the amount of remittances send home. In contrast, the heads of the homesteads in the expansion and consolidation stage are in many cases present on the homestead. Given their average age they have less chance to get a job as migrant labourer and the many daily affairs of his large homestead combined with social control forces him to stay at his homestead. The migrants of these homesteads, then, are mostly young unmarried male which want to escape social and economic control of the head and the slow pace of life in the rural areas. These migrants have quite other motivations to migrate than the young head with strong feelings of responsibility (Rosen-Prinz and Prinz 1978). Still the young migrants of Stage 2 and 3 homesteads have obligations towards homestead members, especially the parents. When a young unmarried male is the heir of the homestead he will probably follow up his father as head and send remittances home to ensure his position, but young unmarried male with no chance at all to have a future share in their father's possessions and wealth may be interested only in making as much money as possible to establish their own homestead. Sending money home only hampers this objective. Although the homestead in the consolidation stage has relatively more members in wage labour (1.8, see Table 1), it may have less profit less from them for this reason.
However, this behaviour of young unmarried migrants may have repercussions for their rights in the long term. The way in which oscillating labour migration operates causes migrants to return home after two or three years. This is also the case when they fall sick or are not able to finish their contract because of other reasons. For the migrant, the homestead is the base to which he will return and which will provide him social protection as far as possible. When the migrant neglects his obligations towards homestead members this behaviour might induce the homestead to be less willing to support the returning migrant. Further research, however, will be needed to verify whether or not such behaviour actually takes place.

Another important observation in the context of this section is derived from a study from Russell (1984) on the redistribution of cash in Swazi society. A major conclusion of her study is that remittances are not just send "home" but to a range of specific individuals to whom, because of specific relationships, migrants feel a particular obligation (Russell 1984:4). Kinship relations indicate the lines of responsibility. Therefore, a migrant will send money to the household in whose kitchen he eats, the kitchen of the woman feeding his children, the women he sleeps with, his mother and father (which may be several "fathers" and "mothers" because of the classificatory kinship system[5]) and grandparents.

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5 With a classificatory kinship system a given person has several people he or she calls "father", "mother", "sister", and so on. Intimacy with and responsibility for these classificatory kin are ordered and well ranked by well understood principles of the logic of lineage, affinity and birth order. In Swaziland, for example, a man's first father is his biological father, but if the biological father should fail or die, then father's eldest brother becomes father. "Father" has obligations to "child", and "child" has obligations to "father" (Russell 1984:11).

Another interesting observation of Russell is that the control over money in Swazi society is highly individualised and the spending is at the discretion of the earners. However, the exchanges of the earned money are still part of the broader pattern of reciprocity, which is highly generalised. Money remittances, therefore, circulate as gifts and it is still considered very ill-mannered to immediately reciprocate a gift. The introduction of money within the pattern of reciprocity creates its own problems because money as a gift threatens to transform generalised reciprocity into carping calculation (Russell 1984:2). The idea behind generalised reciprocity is that I can receive something from someone to whom I did never give. On the other hand, I give to people from whom I will never receive. This generalised reciprocity is the base of the redistribution of means for social security purposes, and ensures that people receive what they need. Because the possession of money is highly individualised, people give money with the idea that they will receive the same amount from the same person in return (or goods which are equivalent to the amount given). Money introduces calculation, therefore, and people will calculate their debts or credits towards each other. The result might be that people do not receive anymore what they need, with all consequences for their welfare. In this way migrant labour might undermine the principle of generalised reciprocity underlying the homestead's capacity to function as solidarity group.

6. Labour Migration and the Economic position of the Homestead

The last question referred to in this paper is the question to what extent labour migration influences the economic position of the homestead, i.e., its capacity to raise means which can be used for redistribution between productive and non-productive members. At first sight one could say that labour migration will provide homesteads with an extra income. But labour migration also means loss of productive power at home and this may negatively influence agricultural produce and rural industry. Table 6 is given to indicate average homestead disposable income and the different sources from which it is realized.

A first conclusion from Table 6 can be that homesteads with migrant labour do not have a higher disposable income than homesteads without migrant labour. Only homesteads which are in the consolidation stage raise a higher income when they are involved in wage labour than homesteads without migrant labourers. This means in essence that migrant labour and the remittances it generates hardly influence the economic position of homesteads in terms of the level of disposable income. Homesteads without migrant labour receive a large share of their means by income generated in commercial agriculture (cotton or maize) and rural industry. Also subsistence production has a larger share in the disposable income than for homesteads with migrant labour. However, ending this section with this observation would not be satisfactory. Not only the level of the disposable income is important when assessing the economic position, but also the conditions under which production takes place and the intra-homestead distribution of income and wealth have to be included. How is labour migration related to these issues?

Homesteads with migrant labourers and those without migrants realize their production in different ways and under different conditions. The two groups of homesteads are integrated differently in the wider economy. The latter homesteads realize their income by producing maize, cash crops and handicrafts. The former homesteads realize their income by selling their labour power on the

Table 6: Average Disposable Homestead Income*) and the Share of Income Generating Activities in the Disposable Homestead Income

	Group 1					Group 2				
		Share of Activities in Income					Share of Activities in Income			
Stage in Dev. Cycle	Disp. Income	Subs. Agt.	Com. Agt.	O.I.G.A.	Remitt.	Disp. Income	Subs. Agt.	Comm. Agt.	O.I.G.A.	Remitt.
Establishment	3100	0.07	0.21	0.72	0.00	2760	0.08	0.02	0.03	0.87
Expansion	4480	0.25	0.21	0.54	0.00	2750	0.10	0.06	0.15	0.59
Consolidation	4140	0.18	0.20	0.51	0.11	4900	0.08	0.17	0.29	0.46
Fission	2370	0.10	0.23	0.49	0.18	4480	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Decline	1190	0.17	0.10	0.57	0.16	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

*) Homestead Disposable Income = Sales Value of Maize Subsistence Production + Income from Commercial Agricultural + Income from Other Income Generating Activities (O.I.G.A.) + Remittances (in E.)

Source: Survey 1990

labour market. Homesteads without migrant labour depend for part of their activities on the input and output markets and part on the natural environment, and are subject to fluctuations in these markets and to fluctuations in ecological and natural conditions. Homestead with migrant labour are dependent on the fluctuating and highly unstable labour market. In this way, as also said in Section 3, the economic position of the homesteads with migrant labour is exposed to other risks than that of homesteads without migrant labourers. For the former type, with their high dependence on income from wage-labour only, unemployment and decline in wages are likely to have large impacts on their welfare. This stands in contrast with homesteads without migrant labour, of which produce and income are better spread over several activities and hence are subject to different risks. In sum, as migrant labour leads to homesteads involved in other markets than homesteads without migrant labour, and therefore face different conditions, their economic position is threatened by different risks.

Narrowly related to the above issue is that homesteads without migrant labour have all their productive activities at home, which means that the local institutional setting will have large influences on their economic position. The extent to which land is available and distributed among homesteads, agricultural and infrastructural projects are initiated, and the homestead can have political influence has large impacts on the economic position. Homesteads with migrant labour are for their economic position less dependent on the local institutional and political setting and are, therefore, less vulnerable to phenomena like, for example, land scarcity and unequal distribution of land.

The intra-homestead distribution of the disposable income also differs between the two sets of homesteads. Labour migration to South Africa is male dominated. This means that the wages earned accrue in first instance to male homestead members. Rural industry activities like beer brewing, making mats and baskets, knitwork, tailoring, and so on, are female dominated. Income from these activities will fall upon women. Income from agricultural activities accrues to both men and women. As explained in Section 2 women keep their own maize production in store. Men keep the production from the "grandmother's field" and receive the money when maize or cotton is sold. Women receive money when they sell vegetables from their garden. It was stated that the daily care of the non-productive homestead members is a task of women. It can be assumed, then, that of the income which accrues to women a larger part will be spent on the general welfare of the homestead, including the care of non-productive members, while income earned by men is to a lesser extent spent on the general welfare of the homestead. Studies (SSRU 1990, Russell 1984) on this issue confirm this assumption.
Unless remittances are sent to women, the economic position of the homesteads without migrant labour can be more positively valued from a social security point of view than the economic position of homesteads with migrant labour, because intra-homestead distribution of income and produce is more directed towards the women. In case remittances are sent to women it can be expected that these will be spent largely on the general welfare of the homestead. Main difference with homesteads without migrant labour remains, however, that in the former case women have more control over monetary earnings because they earn the money with their own activities. In this way women also have more control over the use of this money.

Last issue in this section is whether there is any relationship between the wealth of homesteads and migrant labour. Because land cannot be privately owned, private savings are the main form of wealth. In situations of low real interest rates savings can be best invested in "real estate", which is mainly cattle in the Swazi case. Table 7 presents some figures on cattle ownership.
Table 7 shows that differences with respect to cattle ownership do exist between homesteads with and without migrant labour. However, it is difficult to say whether this can be attributed to migrant labour or not. As in many African societies cattle is only partly obtained from the market. As cattle is, besides money, the main item in which the bride price is paid, homesteads obtain cattle also in other ways. Partly for this reason homesteads in the consolidation stage have more cattle than in other stages: daughters are getting married and homesteads receive cattle when the daughter leaves. Moreover, cattle is accumulated, through breeding and through the market, in order to pay the bride price when sons of the homesteads get married. All this might explain differences between stages in the development cycle, but not between migrant and non-migrant homesteads.
Tentatively three possible explanations for this finding can be put forward. Firstly, homesteads with migrant labourers have more money available than homesteads without. This means that homesteads with migrant labour can more easily acquire cattle from the market and are not solely dependent on non-market transfers of cattle (payments of bride price mainly). Secondly, related to the issue of the distribution of income and produce, in homesteads with migrant labour more income accrues to men than in homesteads without migrants. As the main responsibility of the man (at least the head) is to ensure the long-term survival of the homestead he will invest his savings in cattle to reach this objective. In this way he also guarantees some form of social protection for the

Table 7: Percentage of Homesteads owning Cattle and Average Number of Cattle owned (by stage in the development cycle)

	Group 1		Group 2	
Stage in Development Cycle	% Homesteads owning cattle	Average Number of Cattle	% Homesteads owning Cattle	Average Number of Cattle
Establishment	67.7	7.8	100.0	9.3
Expansion	50.0	6.4	90.0	10.4
Consolidation	75.0	16.8	93.7	16.4
Fission	40.0	19.0	100.0	3.5
Decline	54.5	6.0	N.A.	N.A.

Source: Survey 1990

homestead in case he will get unemployed. Women are responsible for short-term economic decisions related to daily survival. They will spend their money on goods and items necessary for daily survival (see also Raatgever 1988). Homesteads without migrant labour do have a more equal distribution of means between men and women, but at the same time less male savings are available to invest in cattle. In homesteads with migrant labour this is the other way round. A third reason for the difference found might be that men who migrate are usually young men who still have to pay their marriage cattle or part of it, while the men staying at home are more settled and already have fulfilled their bride price payments. With this explanation differences in cattle ownership are explained by the life cycle of individual members rather than by the homestead development cycle.

7. Conclusions

For the majority of the population of Swaziland, the homestead is the most important social and economic unit in Swazi society. Providing social protection to its members is one its functions. Given the various conditions that a solidarity group has to satisfy, we find that the homestead is indeed theoretically capable of performing its protective function. In this paper the central question was how labour migration of homestead members to South Africa affects the homestead as solidarity group. To answer this question I tried to indicate relationships between migrant labour and the several conditions that make a social group to function as a solidarity group.

The influence of migrant labour on the size of the homestead is evident, but has no major consequences as long as remittances are sent home. Migrant labour influences the composition of the homestead in several ways. The resident producers, which are mainly women, have to perform more tasks and indirectly this will influence the daily care of the non-productive members.

Moreover, labour migration gives rise to "female-headed households", which have a difficult position in Swazi social relations. Labour migration does, however, diversify the income sources of the homestead and the covariance of risks is less than for homesteads with home-based production. In this way migrants may make the homestead less vulnerable.

The durability and stability of homesteads are also influenced by migrant labour. Labour migration gives opportunities for young men to raise own income and establish their own homestead. They have an opportunity to break away from the parental homestead. This breaking-up causes a "nuclearization" of homesteads. Although the observation that nuclear homesteads exist should be treated with care, these homesteads must be considered hardly capable to function as solidarity group. The process of breaking-up also gives rise to homesteads containing two generations or less. Due to this fact homesteads are less capable to function as solidarity groups. Labour migration might also threaten the durability and stability of a homestead by creating other social problems like alcoholism, divorces, and so on.

With respect to the principle of "normative insurance" within homesteads, implying generalised reciprocity, labour migration has its impact by introducing money in the sphere of redistribution. In Swazi society money is individually owned and its use is at the discretion of those who have it.

Although money is transferred by the principle of reciprocity, this reciprocity becomes less generalised, thus threatening the main principle underlying intra-homestead solidarity.

The influence of migrant labour on the economic position of the homestead is mixed. It seems to provide homesteads with greater wealth, but it does not provide substantially more income to the homestead compared with homesteads without migrant labour. It must be said that the remittances might be higher than suggested in this paper because of non-monetary contributions. If this is the case, the homesteads with migrant labour will probably be provided with more means than those without. Intra-homestead distribution of income between sexes seems to become more male biased in homesteads engaged in migrant labour. This might lead to a situation in which less means become available for the general welfare of the homestead.

In sum, the impact of labour migration on the homestead as solidarity group is mixed, but I think it can be concluded that on balance it is negative. However, the extent to which labour migration influences individual homesteads as solidarity groups depends on the stage of the homestead in the development cycle. Homesteads in the consolidation stage will feel less negative consequences when one of its members migrates and may even profit from it, while "younger" homesteads become very vulnerable in the sense of being less able to deal with social and economic contingencies.

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Appendix A: Criteria used for Classification of Homesteads

For the classification of homesteads according to their stage in the development cycle, the criteria outlined in Table A were used.

Table A: Criteria used to classify homesteads according to their place in the homestead development cycle

Criteria / Homestead Frequency	Homestead Development Cycle				
	Stage 1 Establishment	Stage 2 Expansion	Stage 3 Consolidation	Stage 4 Fission	Stage 5 Decline
Homestead Size	(a) 1 - 3a (b) 1 - 6b	7 - 10	> 10	7 - 10	1 - 6
Age of Head	(a) < 40a (b) < 50b	(a) < 50a (b) < 55b	- -	Other	Other
Children < 15 years	(a) 0 (b) > 0	- -	- -	than	than
Child / Population Ratio	- -	(a) 0.24 (b) 0.49	- -	Stage 2	Stage 1
Frequency own sample	13	20	25	13	12
% of Total	15.6	24.1	30.1	15.6	14.6
Sample Low	12.0	22.1	26.5	20.3	19.1

Sources: Adapted from Low (1986:83), Table 7.17
Survey 1990

In his study Low (1986) uses a five stage typology formulated by Fortes (1970) for the homestead development cycle: establishment, expansion, consolidation, fission and decline. The criteria used to distinguish the stages are homestead size, homestead composition and the so-called consumers/workers ratio. In Table A these criteria are represented by homestead size, the age of the head and the children/population ratio respectively. Homesteads are in the establishment stage (a) when the homestead size is between 1 and 3, the age of the head is below 40 years and no children are on the homestead, or else (b) when its size is between 1 and 6 members, the age of the head is below 50 years and any children under 16 years old are present. Other homesteads with 1 till 6 members are in the decline stage when the above conditions are not fulfilled. Homesteads are in the stage of expansion when (a) the size ranges from 7 till 10 persons, the age of the head is below 50 years and the children/population ratio is greater than 0.24, or else (b) when the age of the

head is below 55 years and the children/population ratio is greater than 0.49. All other homesteads between 7 and 10 members are supposed to be in the fission stage. The consolidation stage contains homesteads with a size that exceeds 10 persons.

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